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FM AMEMBASSY DHAKA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6654  
INFO RUEHZN/ENVIRONMENT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COLLECTIVE  
RUEHBK/AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 7683  
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 7380  
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 1058  
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 8473  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 9003  
RUEHGO/AMEMBASSY RANGOON 2448  
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 0241  
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

UNCLAS DHAKA 001864

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

S/ES-O/CMS,SCA  
SEOUL FOR APHIS ANDY BALL  
NEW DELHI FOR FAS MICHAEL RIEDEL

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAGR](#) [TBIO](#) [AMED](#) [AMGT](#) [ASEC](#) [CASC](#) [KFLO](#) [AEMR](#) [BG](#)  
SUBJECT: AVIAN INFLUENZA: BDG STOPS, THEN AUCTIONS,  
SMUGGLED INDIAN CHICKS

¶1. Bangladesh has made strides in its plans to prepare against an eventual AI outbreak. A recent case in Rajshahi suggests that more than mere planning is necessary, as customs agents reportedly auctioned off thousands of smuggled Indian chicks that the border patrol forces successfully interdicted.

¶2. The infamous porous borders of Bangladesh allow for all sorts of trade on the grey market. Baby chickens are no exception. The threat of avian influenza has not stopped some poultry farmers from bringing banned Indian chick stocks across the border to be raised and sold. Although Bangladesh has significant domestic chick production capacity, prices are higher than in India, creating economic opportunities for smugglers.

¶3. The Home Ministry's Joint Secretary for Borders, Mr. Harun Chowdhury, told the Embassy that Bangladesh Rifles (BDR), the border patrol forces, have been ordered to increase their vigilance against the chick smugglers. Several caches of Indian chicks have been smuggled into Bangladesh; more than 15,000 were stopped by the BDR this week alone. Chowdhury stated that BDR practice is to destroy all contraband.

¶4. Press reports from Rajshahi, however, indicate that customs officials have sold banned chicks at auction, following their seizure by the BDR. Poultry farmers in that area are calling for a "crack down" on smuggling in order to keep their own stocks healthy.  
BUTENIS